



**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**July 19, 2007**

**For immediate release**

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## **MANURE RELEASE LEADS TO DELAWARE COUNTY FISH KILL**

**MEDIA CONTACTS: Sue Miller or Mike Wade at (563) 927-2640.**

EARLVILLE — The DNR is investigating possible sources of manure that led to a fish kill in eastern Delaware County Wednesday.

Staff members at Plum Creek County Park, located just southeast of Earlville, reported dead fish in Plum Creek to the DNR Wednesday afternoon. It appears that manure washed into the stream from an open cattle feedlot north of Earlville following rainfall this week. Manure has high levels of ammonia, which can be toxic to fish and other aquatic life.

On Wednesday afternoon, the DNR observed dead and struggling fish along a three mile stretch of stream that reached to U.S. Highway 20. Plum Creek is a tributary to the Maquoketa River.

DNR fisheries staff has observed dead common carp, creek chubs, minnows and shiners. The DNR estimates that hundreds of fish are dead, although high stream levels and cloudy water are hindering an official fish count.

The DNR has taken water samples and will use lab results to help determine possible responsible parties. The DNR will continue to investigate and may consider enforcement action.

*Writer: Jessie Brown*

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## **LEARN MORE ABOUT LOCAL WATER QUALITY EFFORTS WITH NEW DNR WEB SITES**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Allen Bonini, DNR, at (515) 281-5107 or Jessie Brown, DNR, at (515) 281-5131.**

DES MOINES — As Iowans get outside to enjoy boating, swimming and fishing this summer, the DNR invites them to learn about local projects that are cleaning up the state's water.

Iowans can learn about water quality challenges, possible solutions and how to get involved through new Web sites featuring each of the DNR's watershed improvement projects. The Web sites can be found by clicking the "find a project" button on the DNR Watershed Improvement page at [www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/](http://www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/).

"Local involvement is at the heart of making real changes in our streams, rivers and lakes, and these projects show that," said Allen Bonini, head of the DNR's Watershed Improvement Section. "We hope that Iowans can learn how to help make our waters cleaner and get involved, whether it's joining an existing project or learning how to start their own."

Watershed improvement projects work with rural landowners, urban residents and other Iowans to improve the quality of water draining from the area surrounding a lake or stream, also called a watershed. Projects work to keep pollutants like sediment, nutrients, pesticides and bacteria from reaching Iowa's waters from "nonpoint" sources. Nonpoint source pollution happens when rainfall or snowmelt washes pollutants from agricultural or urban areas into lakes, rivers and groundwater.

The DNR currently funds about 50 projects across the state, and will continue to add new project Web sites throughout the summer.

The Section 319 program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides DNR funding for nonpoint pollution programs. The DNR generally funds local watershed projects in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

*Writer: Jessie Brown*

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## **DNR URGES FEEDLOT PRODUCERS TO DEVELOP NMP FIRST**

SPENCER – The DNR reminds open feedlot producers who need a nutrient management plan that the plan must be developed and filed in the appropriate DNR field office before they publicize it.

“We’ve had about six producers who placed a public notice in the newspaper that the plan was available for review, but they hadn’t finished the plan yet,” said Jeff Prier, an environmental specialist at the Spencer DNR field office.

Prier said that an important part of the plan is notifying the public that the plan is available in a DNR field office for people to review and comment on.

Producers and the public can find information about the plans on the DNR Web site at [www.iowadnr.gov/afo/mhandling\\_nmp.html](http://www.iowadnr.gov/afo/mhandling_nmp.html), including a form for publishing the public notice (Form 542-1553).

The DNR has notified about 150 producers who have 1,000 or more animal units that they must have the nutrient management plan submitted to the DNR by July 31. A thousand animal units equal 1,000 beef cattle, 700 dairy cattle or 2,500 finishing hogs.

Open feedlot producers who are required to have the plan cannot apply manure after July 31 without a plan approved by the DNR.

Open feedlots can be found throughout the state, but they are more prevalent in northeast, northwest and southwest Iowa.

*Writer: Karen Grimes*

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## **PUBLIC ASKED TO ATTEND MEETING ON IMPROVING MIDDLE FORK SOUTH BEAVER CREEK**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Joe Herring, DNR, at (515) 281-8143 or Chris Van Gorp, DNR, at (515) 281-4791.**

ACKLEY – Iowans interested in improving Middle Fork South Beaver Creek in Grundy and Hardin Counties can attend a public meeting and review a DNR improvement plan for the stream.

The DNR has developed a water quality improvement plan for Middle Fork South Beaver Creek, which is on the state’s impaired waters list because it is not supporting the amount and diversity of aquatic life that it should. It is also a major tributary to the Cedar River, which is also on the impaired waters list for nitrate levels. Many of those nutrients come from Middle Fork South Beaver Creek.

The DNR will ask Iowans for their input on the improvement plan at an Aug. 7 meeting in Ackley. The meeting will take place at 10 a.m. at Ackley City Hall, 208 State St.

“If people care about water quality in the Cedar River, they need to look upstream to the smaller sub-watersheds such as Middle Fork South Beaver Creek,” said Joe Herring, with the DNR’s Watershed Improvement section. “That’s where watershed management can have the most impact on important cultural and recreational rivers that are downstream, such as the Cedar.

“The input of residents in Hardin and Grundy counties is very important to us, as they’re the ones who know and use the stream, and they can help everyone who uses the Cedar River for boating, fishing and drinking water,” Herring added.

Those not able to attend the public meeting can receive more information at [www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/tmdl/](http://www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/tmdl/) and submit comments on the plan (by Aug. 20) via the following ways:

E-mail: [chris.vangorp@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:chris.vangorp@dnr.state.ia.us)

Telephone: Chris Van Gorp at (515) 281-4791

Mail: Chris Van Gorp, care of Iowa DNR, Wallace State Office Building, 502 E. 9th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50319

The DNR’s water quality improvement plan, also called by its technical name of Total Maximum Daily Load, outlines the problems and potential solutions to the problems in Middle Fork South Beaver Creek. After gathering Iowans’ comments, the DNR will forward the final plan to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for approval. Local groups interested in helping Middle Fork South Beaver Creek can then use the plan to assist their improvement efforts.

*Writer: Jessie Brown*

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## **STORMS LEAD TO WASTEWATER BYPASSES IN HAMPTON, CEDAR RAPIDS AND WASHINGTON**

**MEDIA CONTACTS: Hampton: Curt Krieger at (641) 424-4073; Cedar Rapids: Sue Miller at (563) 927-2640; Washington: Paul Brandt at (319) 653-2135.**

DES MOINES – Heavy rain showers throughout the state this week have resulted in numerous reports of wastewater bypasses reaching streams, rivers and lakes. The following were reported to the DNR Thursday morning:

### **Franklin County**

*Hampton:* Approximately 45,000 gallons of untreated wastewater flowed from the Hampton wastewater treatment plant after excess rainwater overwhelmed its system. The

bypass began at 6 p.m. Wednesday at the facility's headworks after more than four inches of rain fell within 45 minutes in the area.

"This event demonstrates a common occurrence in municipal collection systems when cross connections result in a sudden surge in wastewater flow following intense rainfall," said Curt Krieger, an environmental specialist at the DNR field office in Mason City.

The flow stopped by 8 p.m., with the discharge reaching Squaw Creek.

### **Linn County**

*Cedar Rapids:* The City of Cedar Rapids began discharging wastewater overnight from its E. Avenue N.W. sewer location, with the discharge ending approximately 30 minutes after it began.

Flash flooding in the area Monday evening resulted in two of the city's sanitary sewers and five manholes to overflow. Discharge totals from all events remain unknown at this time.

### **Washington County**

*Washington:* The City of Washington discovered a force main leak at one of its lift stations Tuesday afternoon. Sewage from the Sunset Park Lift Station began bubbling from the ground, where it traveled to a storm sewer intake location. The storm sewer discharges to a tributary of Crooked Creek. Washington wastewater treatment plant officials repaired the leak by 5 p.m. Tuesday.

"The City of Washington received more than two inches of rain Wednesday night into Thursday morning, so any impact to the storm sewer or creek was likely washed away," said Paul Brandt, an environmental specialist at the DNR field office in Washington.

Heavy rains in the area are also causing bypassing at the treatment plant early Thursday morning. The treatment plant is bypassing from its storm pond and headworks after heavy rains Wednesday night. The discharge reaches Crooked Creek as well, where amounts discharged remain unknown.

*Writer: Holly Williams*